

We claim:

1. An image capturing device, comprising:
a processor;
at least one interface communicating with said processor and capable of transferring images out of said image capturing device; and
a memory communicating with said processor and capable of storing a plurality of records, with a record including image data and image status data indicating whether a copy of the image has been transferred out of the device;
wherein said processor determines whether said memory includes any archived images as indicated by said status data and replaces one or more archived images in said memory with a newly captured image when insufficient free space exists in said memory to store said newly captured image.
2. The device of claim 1, wherein said at least one interface is a communication interface capable of transmitting a stored image to an external device.
3. The device of claim 1, wherein said at least one interface is a USB cable interface.
4. The device of claim 1, wherein said at least one interface is a removable memory medium interface capable of transmitting a stored image to a removable memory medium.

5. The device of claim 1, wherein said processor is capable of replacing one or more archived images in said memory with a new image when said memory is full.

6. The device of claim 1, wherein said processor is capable of replacing one or more archived images in said memory with a new image when said memory is full, with the replacing step comprising replacing an oldest stored image as indicated by a date/time information in a date/time storage cell of a record in said memory.

7. The device of claim 1, wherein said memory comprises an internal memory.

8. The device of claim 1, wherein said memory comprises a removable memory medium.

9. A memory management method for a memory of an image capturing device, comprising the steps of:

transferring a copy of an image out of said memory during an image archiving operation; and

marking said image in said memory as an archived image;

wherein said archived image is capable of being replaced if said memory is full.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the transferring step comprises transferring said copy to an external computer device.

11. The method of claim 9, wherein the transferring step comprises transferring said copy to a removable memory medium.

12. The method of claim 9, wherein the marking step comprises changing a status variable in an associated status storage cell to an archived state.

13. A memory management method for a memory of an image capturing device, comprising the steps of:

determining whether said memory is capable of storing an additional image;
 storing a captured image in said memory if free space exists in said memory;
 determining if said memory contains at least one archived image, if said memory is not capable of storing said captured image; and
 replacing one or more archived images with said captured image if said memory is not capable of storing said captured image and if said memory contains said at least one archived image.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein the method is performed upon a press of a shutter button of said image capturing device.

15. The method of claim 13, wherein the method is performed upon completion of an image capture.

16. The method of claim 13, wherein an image capture is disabled if said memory is full and if said memory does not contain at least one archived image.

17. The method of claim 13, wherein the determining step includes inspecting status variables corresponding to each image stored in said memory.

18. The method of claim 13, wherein the replacing step replaces an oldest archived image.

19. The method of claim 13, wherein an archived image may be again downloaded.

20. The method of claim 13, further comprising the step of changing a status variable of a replaced archived image to a non-archived status.